



Agenda

Norwich Trails Committee and volunteers monthly meeting

7 pm, July 7, 2021

Location: Kearney-Niles Pavilion, Huntley Meadows

AGENDA

1. Approval of agenda

2. Comments from those present

Trail infrastructure

3. Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned:

- a. Upper Ballard Trail June 13th work day
 - Story posted on Norwich Trails website.
 - Follow-up: Stream crossings work
- b. Installation of Brown Schoolhouse Bridge bench

4. Scope of Lower-Ballard Trail work

- a. Report on Women's Club Funding
- b. Work to be contracted

5. Trail kiosks

- a. Finalize designs
- b. Identify locations
- c. Identify bills of materials for each

6. Trail kiosk signage

- a. Report on Women's Club Funding
- b. Identify locations
- c. Identify material to be shown
- d. Identify town approval process

7. Work days to schedule:

- a. July 18th
- b. August 15th
- c. September 19th
- d. October 17th

8. Planning scope of work on Lower Ballard Trail—Discuss:

- a. Report on flood robustness of UVTA proposed Scope of work

9. Feedback on Appalachian Trail Corridor

- a. Opportunity to comment received from USFS
- b. Draft NTC response

10. Conversion of Burton Woods Road segment to a trail

- a. Identify proposed scope of conversion

- b. Review draft NTC memo to Selectboard
11. Developing a trails master plan, as required by the 2020 Norwich Town Plan.

Financial

12. Planning for FY 2022-23 budget: Parking—Draft report to Norwich selectboard
- a. Gile Mountain
 - b. Burton Woods Road
 - c. Elm Street
 - d. Happy Hill Road

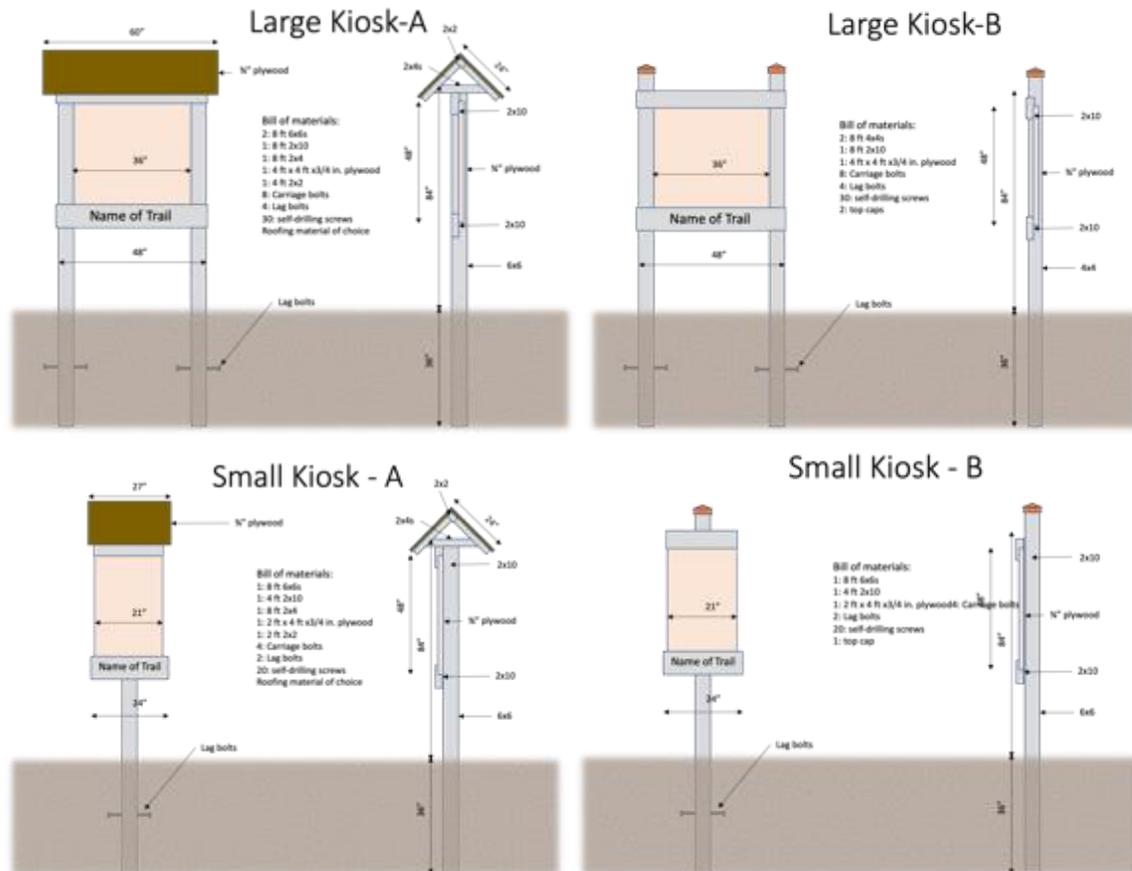
Other

13. Items for August meeting
- a. Schedule construction and installation of kiosks
 - b. Confirm signage for kiosks
14. Items for future meetings

15. Adjourn

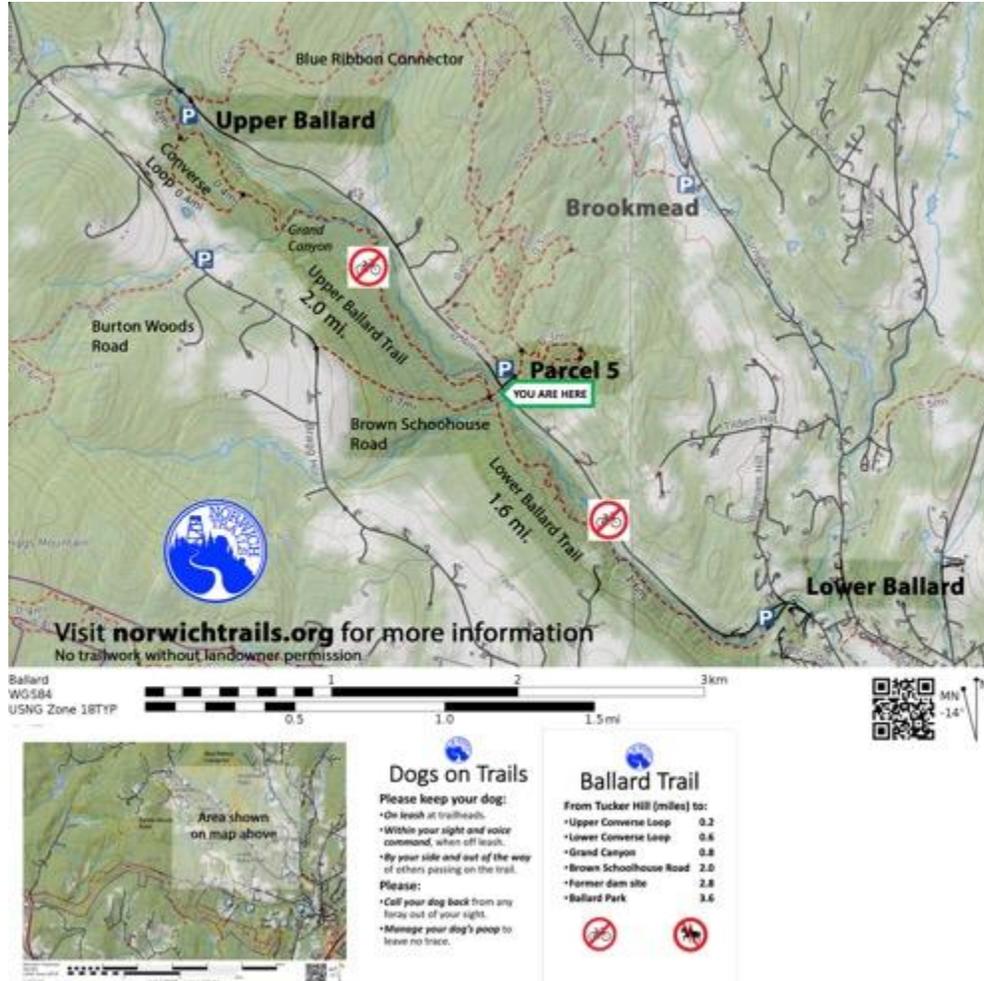
Discussion material for agenda items:

4. Trail kiosks
 - a. Finalize designs



- b. Identify locations
 - Use existing at Gile Mountain, Parcel 5, Ballard Park
 - New large at: Brown Schoolhouse Bridge, Upper Ballard Trail parking, Happy Hill, Cossingham Trail.
 - New small at: both ends of Heyl Trail, top of Brown Schoolhouse Trail, bottom of Burton Woods Trail, top and bottom of Blue-Ribbon Trail, top and bottom of Blue-Ribbon Connector.
 - c. Identify bills of materials for each
 - Planks vs plywood
 - 6x6s vs 4x4s
 - 2 x 10's top and bottom
 - Roof-end cap. Roof adds expense + durability
5. Trail kiosk signage
 - a. Report on Women's Club Funding
 - b. Identify locations:
 - Large (7): Gile Mountain, Parcel 5, Ballard Park, Brown Schoolhouse Bridge, Upper Ballard, Happy Hill, Cossingham.

- Small (8): Heyl Trail (2), Brown Schoolhouse Trail (1), Burton Woods Trail (1), Blue-Ribbon Trail (2), Blue-Ribbon Connector (2)
- c. Identify material to be shown
- Ballard Trail: Brown Schoolhouse Bridge (Upper Ballard and Lower Ballard move the “You are here” signs:



- Happy Hill design subject to resolution of parking and approval of Joshua and Dothan Brook Trails.
 - Cossingham Trail design subject to the same issues.
- d. Identify town approval process

9. Feedback on AT corridor: **See Appendix A.**

10. Conversion of Burton Woods Road segment to a trail: **See Appendix B**

12. Planning for FY 2022-23 budget: Parking—**See Appendix C**

Appendix A: Feedback on AT corridor proposal

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: SETH A. COFFEY, USFS PROJECT CONTACT
FROM: NORWICH TRAILS COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: INPUT: APPALACHIAN TRAIL SIDE & CORRIDOR CROSSING TRAIL DESIGNATIONS
DATE: JULY 8, 2021
CC: NICK KREMBS, STEPHEN FLANDERS, LIZ BURDETTE (UVMBA CHAIRPERSON), BOB HAGEN (GMC)

1. *Summary* – The Norwich Trails Committee supports the proposed Appalachian Trail side and corridor trail designations outlined in a June 2021 Small Projects Day memo on this topic. The committee, in consultation with its volunteers, offers some comments and recommendations, below.
2. *Thanks* – We thank the involved USFS staff for being responsive to our proposal for designating certain trails within the corridor to be added to the NFS system.
3. *Trail relocation* – The proposal includes a brief relocation of the Dothan Brook Trail to be contained entirely within the AT corridor. It says, “This relocation...would be performed with hand tools. No trees over 3 inches would be cut.” We assume that the windfall present—much greater in diameter than three inches—would be cut with chainsaws.



Examples of windfall to be cleared to establish a relocation of the Dothan Brook Trail

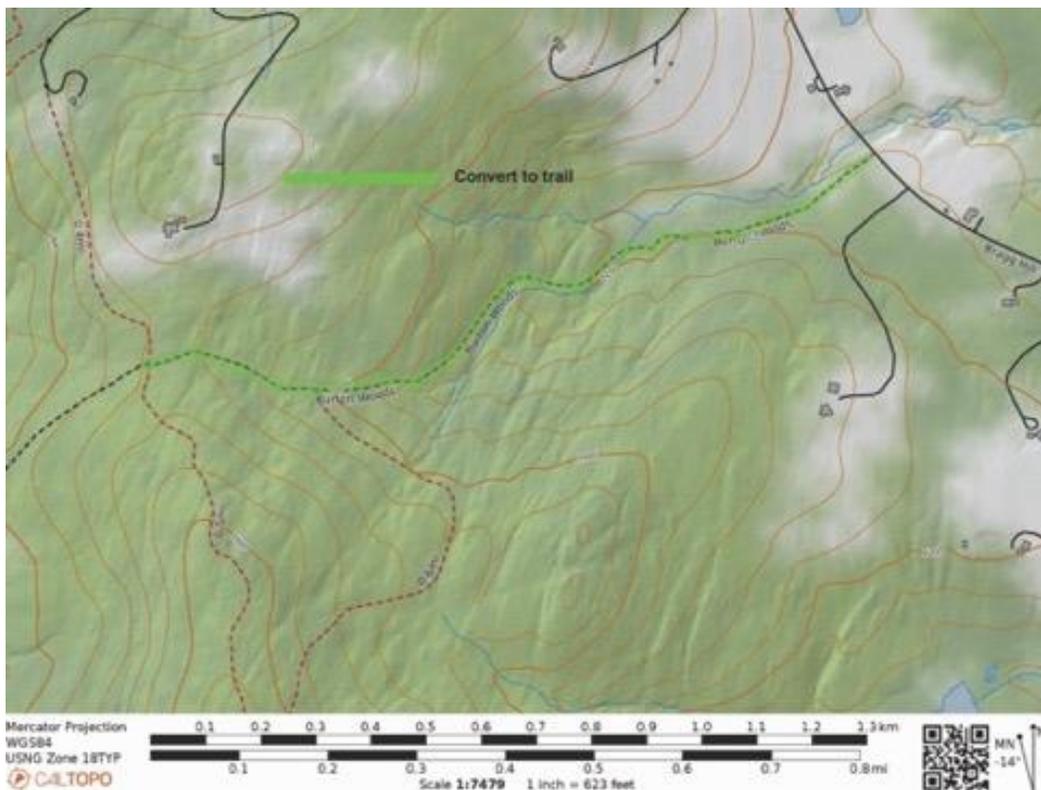
4. *Five Points intersection* – We note the expectation of placing forest debris in the intersections of non-conforming trails. We wish to note some issues at the Five Points intersection.
 - In late fall and winter there is ATV traffic going north and south across that point, which would likely trample any natural barriers placed there. What would the USFS approach be, if this were to happen?
 - Unless there is a clear resolution of the apparent co-location of the corridor and Town Highway 51, we would be reluctant to place barriers across a town highway, leading to the north side of Five Points.
 - The other nearby trail north of Five Points, leading up Griggs Mountain, is a candidate for the use of forest debris or plantings as a barrier, recognizing that seasonal ATV traffic may not find such measures discouraging.
5. *Budgeting and execution* – We note the proposal to move an existing gate, provide a new barrier to motorized traffic and to provide signage. Would these measures be implemented through USFS funding and contracting procedures or is there an expectation of volunteer efforts from Norwich Trails and the Upper Valley Mountain Bike Association (UVMBA)? What other actions might draw on our volunteer resources?
6. *Maintenance* – We understand that the Green Mountain Club coordinates trail adopters within the corridor. The Norwich Trails volunteers offer to adopt the Griggs Mountain and Dothan Brook Trails. We would expect the UVMBA to adopt the Joshua Trail.

Appendix B: Re-classification of Burton Woods Road

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: NORWICH SELECTBOARD
FROM: NORWICH TRAILS COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: REQUEST: RECLASSIFY PORTION OF BURTON WOODS ROAD AS TRAIL
DATE: JULY 8, 2021
CC: NICK KREMBS, STEPHEN FLANDERS, LIZ BURDETTE (UVMBA CHAIRPERSON)

7. *Request* – The Norwich Trails Committee requests that the selectboard change the classification of the portion of Burton Woods Road between Bragg Hill Road and the ridge of Griggs Mountain from “Fourth-Class Road”, which allows the use of motorized vehicles, to “Trail”, where such vehicles are prohibited without a permit. The western side of the ridge would remain open to motorized traffic.

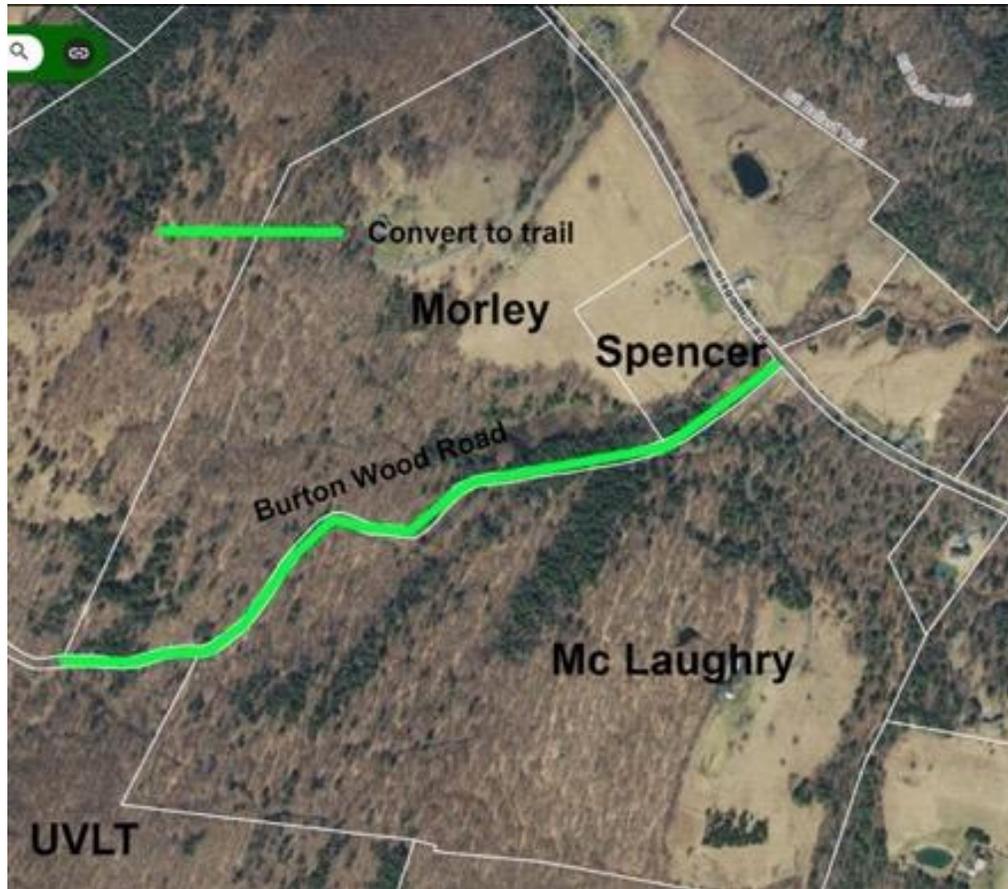


Site of proposed conversion to trail from Bragg Hill to the ridge of Griggs Mountain

8. *Justification* – The right of way (ROW) is steep and wet. Occasional recreational vehicle traffic exacerbates the erosion and prevents mitigation of damage. Conversion to a trail will

allow implementation of sustainable erosion control measures that will greatly increase the usefulness of the trail to cyclists and hikers. More details are described in the **Image Gallery**.

9. *Abutters* –There are four abutting properties to the section of ROW proposed for conversion:
- South side: Susan F. McLaughry Revokable Trust, 1093 Bragg Hill Road.
 - South side, near ridge: Upper Valley Land Trust, 19 Buck Road, Hanover, NH 03755
 - North side, on Bragg Hill Road: Catherine Spencer, 1141 Bragg Hill Road.
 - North side, west of Spencer to the ridge: Benjamin and Christianna Morley, 1219 Bragg Hill Road.



Parcels adjacent to proposed trail conversion

10. *Impact* –Conversion to a trail would have the following effects.
- The section does not connect to properties requiring motor vehicle access.
 - It is part of a variety of loops that serve cyclists and hikers.
 - The road beyond the west side of the trail serves several camps, which gain access from Tigertown Road and would be unaffected by the conversion.
 - It would allow sustainable erosion control measures that would benefit cyclists and hikers.
 - Forestry operations using the ROW would be subject to a permit that could require repairing any damage to drainage structures.

11. *Statute* – [19 V.S.A. § 304](#) grants the selectboard the power to “lay out, alter, classify, and discontinue town highways”. [19 V.S.A. § 708 \(a\)](#) allows the selectboard to initiate laying out, altering, reclassifying, or discontinuing highways on its own. [19 V.S.A. § 709](#) requires the board to:
- Appoint a time and date both for examining the premises and hearing the persons interested.
 - Give 30 days' notice to the petitioners, and to persons owning or interested in lands through which the highway may pass or abut, of the time when they will inspect the site and receive testimony.
 - Give notice to any municipal planning commission in the town, post a copy of the notice in the office of the town clerk, and cause a notice to be published in a local newspaper of general circulation in the area not less than ten days before the time set for the hearing.
 - Give notice by certified mail sent to the official residence of the person(s) required to be notified.
12. *Ordinance* – The Norwich [ordinance relating to use of trails](#) says:
- Trail rights of way may be used for hiking, walking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, horseback riding and other similar activities all at the risk of the user.
 - The operation of a motor vehicle is prohibited on any Trail, as defined herein, unless the operator of the motor vehicle has a valid permit issued by the Norwich Selectboard.
 - No person may alter or injure the right of way of any Trail by obstructing or diverting a stream, water course or sluice, or by dragging logs or timber or any other objects within the right of way or cutting brush or trees, or altering drainage or grades and slopes, or any other modifications within the Trail right of way without first having received a permit from the Selectboard.
13. *Draft motion* – “... to initiate re-classification of the portion of Burton Woods Road from Bragg Hill Road to the crest of the ridge of Griggs Mountain from “Fourth-Class Road” to “Trail”, to be named “Burton Woods Trail”, pursuant to the authority granted by 19 V.S.A. § 708 (a) and after completing the steps required by 19 V.S.A. § 709.”

Image Gallery

Images were shot on 20 June 2021 during semi-drought conditions.



Entry from Bragg Hill Road is narrower than a vehicle



Traffic observed was mostly mountain bikes.



Lower section is normally poorly drained.



The "road" passes through a beaver pond.



Multiple sections of the ROW are wet and drain through tire ruts.



Steep, rocky sections compromise vehicle passage.



This stream crossing near the ridge is usually much wetter.



The junction at the top of the proposed re-classification



The trail leading south at the junction



The trail leading north at the junction

Appendix C: Parking budget proposal

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: NORWICH SELECTBOARD
FROM: NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SUBJECT: NORWICH TRAILS CAPITAL BUDGET PLAN FOR 2023
DATE: MONTH X, 2021
CC: TOWN MANAGER, NORWICH TRAILS COMMITTEE

1. *Summary* – This memo summarizes capital budgetary priorities for the fiscal year 2022-3 and beyond. It is a result of a survey of trail infrastructure on town-owned land, which is summarized here by categories.¹ It is presented by fiscal year.
2. *Budgetary plan for FY 2022-3* – The capital spending items, supporting Norwich trails for FY 2022-3, include installation of expanded parking at the following locations (costs to be determined):
 - Construction of the Gile Mountain trailhead expanded parking lot.



Area for expansion of the Gile Mountain parking lot

- Happy Hill Road installation of parking beyond power pole on south side to avoid conflict with turn-around. Existing parking would receive a sign, defining the area reserved for turn-around.

¹https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1W_Ua2HNDVy2KGUAmzq71Y2nGbS3GeDoYSOZ3sFkAWVs/edit#gid=0



Area for expansion of Happy Hill parking lot

- Elm Street parking improvements, as follows: Utility ROW (subject to coordination with neighbors), augmented shoulder parking, and augmented shoulder spillover parking on Hickory Ridge Road.



Area for expansion of Elm Street parking

- Bragg Hill Road: Gravel turnout opposite the Heyl Trail entrance for two spaces.
- Hazen Trail: Expansion of parking by two spaces.

- Two-vehicle off-road parking at Burton Woods Trail.



Area for a Burton Woods Trail parking lot